

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
West Pennant Hills
NSW 2125
Ph 9634 2508

3 December 2012

The Director
Major Projects Assessment,
Department of Planning and Infrastructure,
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir

Re: North West Rail EIS 2

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the second EIS for the station construction works for this major project.

Firstly I would like to say I am in support of the project and would like to see the project completed as soon as possible.

I responded to the first EIS with a number of concerns but unfortunately did not get the feeling my concerns were adequately addressed in the generalized responses published.

So I make these comments on EIS 2 with no great expectation that anything will be altered. And this feeling is reinforced by the outcomes of recent meeting with planning staff.

My concerns are focused on what is presently called Cherrybrook Station as my property is [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Castle Hill Road.

Noise and Light.

The latest planning shows that the station is now to be in the open air rather than underground as in previous designs. We are given no explanation of this change which is now going to have a much bigger impact on us

It now raises our concerns about noise and light pollution which will be generated by the operation of the station.

There is nothing in the documents to convince me that we will not be significantly impacted by a massive increase in light and noise coming from the station.

I have pointed this out to Mr B Baker from the Department and requested that additional screening be included in the final design but was told this will be not need as there will be no impact on the quiet enjoyment of our property.

I suggested a simple variation in the shape of the excavation could be a start in mitigating the transmission of light and noise but this suggestion was rejected by Mr Baker.

We also asked that some form of screening be included along the Castle Hill road frontage of the station but it would seem to me that Community Consultation is not about trying to work with locals to minimize the impacts of such major developments as this suggestion was also dismissed. It was as though we had to accept what was being dished up, take it or leave it. And no matter how valid our concerns, nothing was going to be changed.

We note also that the site plan for the station construction shows a construction access point [REDACTED]. There is no indication of what noise and light mitigation measures are proposed to lessen the impact on our place caused by vehicles entering and leaving the site during the long construction period proposed.

Heritage Study.

My property [REDACTED] is recognized once again in the Heritage studies undertaken as part of this EIS. It was also recognized in all previous studies for this project.

In the previous EIS, the setting of [REDACTED] was recognized as being important and yet in that EIS the vegetation across the road, an important element of that setting, was set to be totally removed.

In the current EIS the heritage study again acknowledges that the removal of the vegetation along the Castle Hill Road frontage of the station site will have "...a moderately adverse" impact on the setting of [REDACTED] and still we are not offered any adjustment to the design to alleviate this impact.

The current drawings of the station site show a small area of vegetation directly opposite [REDACTED] in what can only be considered tokenism. It neither reflects the real extent of the actual vegetation nor the actual vegetation which is part of the "setting" of [REDACTED]. Given that the majority of the vegetation we are concerned about is on the perimeter of the site, we cannot understand why the trees cannot be saved. There is certainly no indication in the EIS document that any consideration has been given to retaining the trees. Instead, I am told that it is easier to get approval to clear the site as part of the EIS and during final design/construction we will see what can be saved. Clearly that will be too late. This is a significant belt of mature trees we are talking about.

In any project undertaken by private enterprise, there would be rigorous assessment of any proposals to clear vegetation and all attempts would be required to minimize any trees removed. Why not in this case ?

Property Access

We had asked after viewing EIS 1 for details of how our existing levels of vehicle access will be maintained. We were not given any undertakings.

Again we are concerned that upgrades to traffic facilities in Castle Hill Road will impact on our vehicle access. Specifically, if a continuous traffic island is placed along the centre of Castle Hill Road we will suffer serious disadvantage.

At this stage we are being told that the traffic signals proposed for the Franklin Road intersection will be removed after construction has been finalized.

We would request that these signals be retained and have a right out phase included if any traffic islands are proposed past our properties in Castle Hill Road

Pedestrian Access

We have inspected the model of the station works at the Castle Hill information centre and are amazed that there is no provision for grade separation of pedestrian traffic across Castle Hill Road.

There is an ideal opportunity for a pedestrian underpass at the Glenhope Road intersection where the walkway over the station is significantly lower than Castle Hill Road and at an ideal level to be continued on under the road.

The matter was raised in meetings with Mr Baker but was rejected as being too expensive. Within the overall context of the cost of the project I find this statement concerning and hollow.

As the residential density around the station site increases, the need for pedestrians to cross Castle Hill Road will get to the point where there will be a major impact on the traffic in the area as a result of pedestrian phases in the proposed traffic signals at Glenhope Road. Modeling of current conditions may well show there is no present need for an underpass but future development around the station will significantly change the nature of pedestrian traffic.

We have heard that the RMS are concerned at maintaining traffic movement through the area and hence the decision to remove the signals at Franklin Road but yet are happy to have constant interruption at Glenhope Road caused by pedestrians. And the interesting thing is that maximum pedestrian activity normally overlaps maximum road traffic.

Modern traffic planning requires maximum separation of pedestrians and vehicles to improve traffic flow and to increase pedestrian safety and yet here we have a government ignoring all normal criteria.

This opportunity should not be overlooked. It will be much easier and cheaper to do it now, to say nothing of the possible deaths and injuries it would save.

Station Naming

The current naming of stations along the N W Rail route shows a complete ignorance of the location of the local communities. The stations named Cherrybrook and Kellyville are nowhere near the local centres servicing those communities and will create ongoing confusion amongst travelers if allow to be used once the line is operating.

Cudgegong Road is another station with a name which will not be helpful to users of the service.

It is strongly suggested that these new stations be given unique, unambiguous names which reflect their locations so that future travelers will not be dumped kilometers from where they were expecting to be.

I am sure the local Historical Society would be able to supply some more appropriate names.

So in summary, I understand that there will be some impacts from such a major undertaking, but I would suggest that there is a need to provide greater assurances to affected residents that these impacts will be properly managed and that we will have access to senior management to have matters resolved quickly. I look forward to your comments.

Yours faithfully

